

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FINAL

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Monroe Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON
Old Monroe County Library

105-055-41015

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
200 East 6th Street

CITY, TOWN
Bloomington

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
7th

STATE
Indiana

--- VICINITY OF
CODE
018

COUNTY
Monroe

CODE
105

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER not in us

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Bloomington Restorations Inc.

STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 1055

CITY, TOWN
Bloomington

STATE
Indiana 47401

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Monroe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN
Bloomington

STATE
Indiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Indiana Historic Sites Survey

DATE
1972

--- FEDERAL STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Division of Historic Preservation, Dept. of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN
Indianapolis

STATE
Indiana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Public Library in Bloomington is an example of twentieth century neo-classical structure. This one story structure rests on an elevated basement which originally was a large room intended for use as an auditorium for civic and cultural events. The auditorium, now divided into separate rooms, can be reached by an outside entrance on the north side of the structure. Constructed entirely of native limestone, the building measures approximately 50 by 40 feet. A two story cement block addition measuring 20 by 20 feet was constructed in 1955 at the back southeastern corner.

Two arched windows flank either side of a projecting frontispiece, with front entrance on the main (north) facade. The entry is emphasized by a large semi-circular transom, which in turn, is surrounded by a projecting arch supported by scrolls. The stairs narrow toward the entrance and are lined with carved stone banisters. A pagoda-shaped roof caps the doorway arch.

A stringcourse runs across the width of the building and serves as a projecting moulding between the door arch and the scrolls and as the capitals of wide pilasters which project from either side of the arched windows. Double brackets under a hipped roof repeat the shape of the scrolls at the entrance.

The first floor is divided into three rooms. The main room runs the length of the front of the building and joins a central hall extending to the back, forming a "T". The library's interior is distinguished by a pair of large square pillars capped by scrolls and arches which accentuate the height of the ceiling. On the east wall is a paneled fireplace.

The building is presently empty. The community is considering a proposal to use the structure as a museum and/or community center.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1917

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Wilson B. Parker

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Monroe County Library, built in 1917, was the culmination of a long and tenacious struggle to bring literature and learning to Bloomington. The existence of a library at Bloomington dates back to the founding of the town. A room was set aside for the library in the log courthouse on the town square, and in 1821 the first books were purchased.

It became apparent toward the end of the century that the library needed larger quarters, preferably a building of its own. Two womens' civic clubs were responsible for fund-raising efforts during the next two decades. The Sorosis Club attempted to obtain a grant for a building from Andrew Carnegie as early as 1897 and included the question of accepting Carnegie's offer in a local referendum. Unfortunately, the ballot also contained questions about funding a new courthouse and sewer system, and the library question was defeated. The Nineteenth Century Club took up the cause and, in 1909, reestablished the library in a room in the new county courthouse.

In 1915, the Sorosis Club again approached Carnegie. The customary conditions of a Carnegie grant were that the town had to provide a site and guarantee the building's ongoing maintenance. Carnegie initially offered the Club \$15,000 and later \$20,000. Since the offer came at a time when the town was attempting to construct a hospital, public support for a library was overshadowed by the need for a health facility. Therefore, the town could not accept the offer. By 1917, the situation had changed; for \$21,000 the Library Board purchased a quarter-block which had been the site of the town's black school. Intent on erecting an architecturally significant building for the community, the Library Board decided to select an architect rather than hold a competition for architectural plans. From the dozen or more architects who applied for the project, the Board selected Wilson B. Parker of Indianapolis. Parker was already well-known for his library structures throughout the state and had already designed a number of libraries for the Carnegie Corporation. Carnegie offered a grant of \$28,000, but the Board rejected it, asking for \$40,000. The Board convinced the Carnegie Corporation to raise its grant from \$28,000 to \$31,000. John M. Weaver of Indianapolis was selected as the contractor. Weaver had recently finished the Bloomington City Hall.

Wilson Boyden Parker was born in Natick, Massachusetts in 1867. After two years at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he began his career in New York City with the firm of McKim, Mead and White, designers of some of many public structures and luxurious private mansions. Moving to South Bend, Indiana, in 1892, he formed a partnership with local architect Ennis R. Austin; and during their eight-year association, the two men designed a number of the most important buildings erected in that city, that including Sr. James Church, the Chamber of Commerce Building, Epworth Hospital, the St. Joseph County Savings Bank Building, the first complex of buildings for the Singer Manufacturing Company, the city Post Office, the city library, two schools, and a number of mansions.

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In 1903 Parker moved to Indianapolis and established a firm with Herbert W. Foltz. Foltz and Parker designed for Indianapolis the YMCA building, Bobbs-Merrill publishing house, Branch Library No. 3, and the Hasselman and Powell mansions. Elsewhere, they created the Terre Haute YWCA Building, several country clubs, and the thirty-two building State Hospital complex at Madison, Indiana. During World War I, Parker left Indianapolis to work for a year in the Construction Division of the War Department in Washington, D.C. After his return, he became reknown for architecture. A prolific designer, by 1924, he had created over thirty libraries, including those at Pana, Illinois; Grand Haven, Michigan; and in Indiana at Pendleton, Spencer, Bloomington, and Indianapolis Branch Library No. 6.

The building that Parker designed for Bloomington incorporated ideals that Carnegie espoused. The basement was a single, large room intended for use as an auditorium for civic and cultural events. It was reached by an outside entrance so that it could be accessible after library hours. The massive fanlight above the main entrance was semi-circular in deference to Carnegie's request that his libraries have doorways surmounted by representations of a rising sun - a symbolic doorway to knowledge and enlightenment. In a departure from what has come to be called "Carnegie Classic" architecture, the sheer wall that rises above the fanlight is reminiscent of the Egyptian style in its unadorned massiveness.

Taking advantage of indigenous building material, Parker's structure is built entirely of large limestone blocks--a luxury which even in that day was economically possible only for public buildings of the largest cities and mansions of the wealthy. Although most of Parker's libraries were designed as brick structures embellished with limestone trim, the Old Monroe County library, erected in the Indiana "limestone belt", was favored with a blue-ribbon facade. It stands today as one of a handful of buildings remaining in the community which are constructed of solid-block limestone rather than of stone veneer. In keeping with its classical style, the library's interior was highlighted by a pair of huge, square pillars capped by scrolled brackets repeating those at the entrance, and arches which accentuate the height of the ceiling.

When the library opened its doors in 1918, it had a collection of nearly 2,000 volumes and served over 400 city patrons. It was still primarily a town rather than a county library. County residents had to pay a fee to borrow books unless their townships contributed toward the library's maintenance. In 1929, the policy changed, and the library began serving a county-wide clientele.

In 1929, the Board was financially able to turn its attention to such non-essentials as landscaping. The trees purchased for the library grounds were selected as memorials. A tulip tree was chosen because it is the "state tree", and a Japanese maple was planted in honor of Maude Wilson, the Board's pioneering president, who had planted similar red maples in her own yard.

Over the years the basement auditorium became the community center. It served one of its most important functions during World War II when Red Cross volunteers used the facility for rolling bandages. Spatial limitations dictated construction of a two-story cement-block

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rear wing in 1955 and subdivision of the auditorium in order to accomodate the library's record, art print, and film collections. In 1970, the fifty-two year old building was retired as a library.

On October 10, 1973, the Old Library was determined by the Department of the Interior to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In 1974, Bloomington City Redevelopment Commission acquired the structure. In the fall of 1977, a private donator made it possible for the acquisition and preservation of the building by Bloomington Restorations Inc.

The Old Library is significant to the community architecturally and as a product of local industry. The building is a fine example of monumental architectural style in keeping with design tenets of the early twentieth century City Beautiful Movement. Parker strove for the appearance of strength, permanence, and dignity rather than lightness, delicacy, and airiness. The dominant hip roof and wide eaves supported by simple brackets combine with symmetrically placed pavilion and arched windows to create an overall monumental effect. The simplicity of the building's detail indicates that Parker was not a slavish imitator of classical detail.

The Old Library is a monument not only to early twentieth century architecture but also to the local limestone industry. Economically, the limestone quarries have been important to south central Indiana in general and to Monroe County in particular. Constructed of solid limestone, the Old Monroe County Library Building stands as a reminder of the regional importance of Indiana limestone as a building material and a source of industry.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records, Monroe County Public Library
 Newspaper file, Monroe County Public Library
 D'Esopo, Dana. "History of the Old Monroe County Library". n.p., 1972
 Lynch, Bruce E. "The Old Library, Bloomington, Indiana: Preservation Feasibility Study".
 Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1977.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 6	5, 4, 0, 4, 5, 0	4, 3, 3, 5, 2, 5, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Bruce Tone and Dana D'Esopo

ORGANIZATION

Save the Library Committee

DATE

April, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bloomington

STATE

Indiana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

Dec 21-77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



10' Old Monroe
 County Library
 T. 9 N. Bloomington, Ind.
 U.T.M. Reference
 16/540450/43352

32°30" CLEAR CREEK 1.2 MI. BEDFORD 21 MI. 541000m.E. INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.—1967 543 86°30' 39°07'30" 4331000m.N.

MILE

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty ————— Light-duty ————
- Medium-duty ———— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
- State Route



BLOOMINGTON, IND.
 NE/4 BLOOMINGTON 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3907.5—W8630/7.5

1966

AMS 3662 II NE—SERIES V851

CALLENS CREEK
 3762 III SW